



## **DRAFT MEETING NOTES**

### **IPAC ESA/DVR Subcommittee Meeting**

**Capital View Building 1, Olympia, WA  
September 14, 2009**

The IPAC ESA/DVR Subcommittee Meeting convened on September 14, 2009 at the Capital View Building 1 in Olympia, WA.

► **In Attendance:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Tribe/Organization</b>
<b>Marilyn Scott</b>	<b>Upper Skagit Indian Tribe</b>
<b>Kay Cockerill</b>	<b>Upper Skagit Indian Tribe</b>
<b>Julie Jefferson</b>	<b>Office of Indian Policy</b>
<b>Brady Rossnagle</b>	<b>DSHS, ESA, DCS</b>
<b>Brice Montgomery</b>	<b>DSHS, ESA, DCS</b>
<b>Marilyn Olson</b>	<b>Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe</b>
<b>David Rendon</b>	<b>DSHS, ESA, CSD</b>
<b>William Martin</b>	<b>Skokomish Tribe</b>
<b>Bonita Cleveland</b>	<b>Quileute Tribe</b>
<b>Mike Mowrey</b>	<b>DSHS, ESA, STRO</b>
<b>Dori Shoji</b>	<b>DSHS, ESA, OAS</b>
<b>Rochelle Warner</b>	<b>DSHS, ESA, STRO</b>
<b>Avreayl Jacobson</b>	<b>DSHS, DVR</b>
<b>Sandy Jsames</b>	<b>DSHS, ESA, CSD</b>
<b>Sarah Sotomish</b>	<b>DSHS, ESA, STRO</b>
<b>Colleen Cawston (phone)</b>	<b>DSHS, OIP</b>
<b>Helen Fenrich (phone)</b>	<b>Tulalip Tribes</b>

► **Welcome & Introductions:**

Sarah Colleen Sotomish, STRO Administrator for ESA, welcomed everyone to the IPAC ESA/DVR Subcommittee Meeting and asked for introductions.

► **Economic Services Administration Updates:**

- Assistant Secretary of ESA, Troy Hutson announced that the Gates Foundation awarded ESA with the funding that is needed for ESA to purchase two customized vans to be used as mobile Community Services Offices (CSOs). He discussed how these mobile offices are part of a much larger initiative designed to transform the way we do business across the state in order to better meet the needs of our customers.

These mobile offices will provide direct outreach to traditionally underserved areas and communities in the state by traveling to places where it has been difficult for individuals to get information and access services. In addition, the mobile offices will also be utilized to assist ESA's disaster relief efforts. The customized vans will provide private interview rooms. They will be staffed to accept applications to determine eligibility, and provide eligible households with public assistance benefits for programs including Basic Food and medical assistance. The vans are scheduled to roll out by Spring 2010.

- Troy also shared information on the successful negotiations by the State Tribal Relations Office (STRO) and the Division of Child Support's Tribal Relations Team to establish combined ACES and SEMS Data Share Agreements with the Lummi Nation and the Quinault Indian Nation (both operate TANF & Child Support programs) and the Puyallup & Suquamish Tribes (both operate Child Support programs).
- He announced and congratulated the Colville Confederated Tribes who recently received federal approval to operate a child support program. They are the seventh Tribe in our state and the 36<sup>th</sup> in the nation to operate an IV-D program.
- Troy shared information on the department's proposal for a Tribal Poverty Summit to be held in 2010. ESA is collaborating with the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe and Colleen Cawston, Office of Indian Policy, on these efforts. This summit would focus on issues and challenges specific to Tribes in Washington State. The Gates foundation has informed the department that it is willing to contribute funding for this initiative. He announced ESA's desire to form a steering committee to assist with these efforts by Spring 2010.
- Troy discussed the major budget challenges we are encountering involving funding for Tribal TANF, including the 5% reduction in funding for Tribal TANF programs that is in our budget for 2009-2011. The reduction brings the funding level down from \$14.3 million to \$13.6 million a year. As a result of this, funding for Tribal TANF funding has been frozen at current levels, and there will be limited funding available to help Tribal TANF Tribes address their Unique Needs. He stated Sarah Colleen would speak more to this in her presentation on Unique Needs. He explained how ESA stands a risk of having insufficient funds in reserve to cover the costs of any new Tribal TANF programs. Should this occur we may need to request additional Tribal TANF funding from the Legislature.
- Troy also discussed the substantial reduction in 2009-2011 funding for the General Assistance for the Unemployable (GA-U) 2009-11. The Legislature cut funding for GA-U cash assistance by \$18.5 million, which represents a 9% reduction. In the budget for Health and Recovery Services Administration (HRSA) within DSHS, the Legislature also reduced funding for GA-U Medical Care Services by \$40 million, which equates to an 18% reduction. He stated that reductions of this nature make it difficult sustain the program – given the significant loss of funding and increase in GA-U caseloads. As a result of the economic downturn, more people are applying. In the last year, GA applications have increased by 30% and enrollment has increased by 11%. Changes will be needed to achieve about \$14 million in savings and stay within budget for the program. The Governor and the Legislature will make the final decisions. ESA will be proposing WAC changes, but they won't be scheduled to go into effect until March 2010 so the Legislature has a chance to react. They may not be comfortable with the proposed cuts. He affirmed there is no easy solution to this situation.

- Troy discussed the administrative reductions for ESA of \$51.4 million and 237.5 FTEs. Additionally, the Governor has asked state agencies to reduce their budgets by an additional 2%. With the budget deficit which now stands at over \$482 million for the remainder of the biennium, and is expected to increase, layoffs and additional reductions are likely. He stated in making layoff decisions, we will strive to maintain the quality of the services we provide to our clients while preserving as many employees as possible. Over the last year, Basic Food and TANF caseloads have increased. The Basic Food caseload has increased by 23%. He explained it is clear we can no longer continue business as usual. As a result of this, we are redesigning how we will deliver services to the public, looking for ways we can share resources across office and regional boundaries as positions become vacant attrition and retirements. Another revenue forecast will be revealed on Wednesday, September 16, 2009.
- Troy discussed the significant amount of staff resources statewide that ESA invests in support of its work with Tribes and the challenges of maintaining this level of support given the current state budget situation. He emphasized that ESA's commitment to working with the Tribes remains strong. Troy said he is always open for ideas and welcomed any suggestions on ways to improve the way we do business.
- He announced that DSHS Secretary will be presenting at the IPAC meeting on October 8<sup>th</sup> during which she will discuss her vision for the future of the Department.

► Unique Needs for Tribal TANF:

- Sarah Colleen Sotomish provided an update on behalf of the State Tribal Relations Office (STRO). She shared the history and purpose of Unique Needs (UN) and informed meeting participants of the increasingly more stringent requirements for Unique Needs Funding Proposals. She discussed the proposed UN guidelines ESA has developed to evaluate UN funding proposals by Tribal TANF programs and explained that STRO will work with each Tribal TANF program to explain the proposed UN funding requirements and respond to any questions or concerns. ESA will share the proposed UN guidelines at the October 8<sup>th</sup> IPAC meeting.

► Division of Vocational Rehabilitation:

- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Community Relations Administrator, Avreayl Jacobson explained her role and discussed DVR's mission. She also shared how Washington State DVR works collaboratively with Tribal VR Programs to increase access to vocational rehabilitation services and enhance the employment of individuals with disabilities, served by DVR and American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Programs.
- She distributed a Washington State map which identifies DVR's three areas, the Area Managers' contact information and statewide office locations. She stated Washington State has seven Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation programs. A request was made to modify the DVR map to identify the Tribal VR programs, their contact information and service areas.

- The annual meeting of the Department of Services for the Blind, DVR, and Tribal VR Programs will occur at Stillaguamish to update their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The current MOU is posted on the DVR website at the "Tribal VR" link under Quick Links.
- Avreayl announced several open positions as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor at Chehalis and Silverdale. To see if you qualify for a DVR Counselor position, refer to <http://www.dshs.wag.gov/dvr/Jobs/JobsAdDVR.aspx> and click on the job specification.

► Division of Child Support:

- Division of Child Support (DCS) Executive Assistant, Brice Montgomery, discussed DCS's strategy to help minimize the budget constraints. DCS has created initiatives to aid in this process. The cost saving ideas include: reduce leasing costs by vacating five building, offer the downshifting incentive program, purchasing own servers and possibly saving in SEMS data storage costs, reduce legal costs for County Prosecuting Attorneys, relying on their staff to share costs saving ideas.
- Brice also provided DCS Legislative Updates. These updates included: (1) implementation of Medical Support Obligations, SHB 1845, which is effective 10/01/09; (2) implementation of changes to the Washington State Child Support Scheduled, ESHB 1794, effective 10/01/09; and (3) status of Further Expanding the Rights & Responsibilities of State Registered Domestic Partners, E2SSB 5688)-Referendum (R-71), which will be on the November ballot for voter approval. DCS legislative proposals for the 2010 session will include: Z-0792 Review and Adjustment, and a Placeholder for Medical Support.
- Marilyn Olson shared that their attorney is looking at the Tribal provision in the ARRA legislation with regards to cash medical support implementation. She asked if DCS considered ARRA provisions regarding co-pays and premiums. Brice will get clarification regarding this issue. DCS welcomes any input from tribes regarding the impact of the ARRA on medical support enforcement.
- Similar to the CSO Redesign, DCS is looking at new ways of doing business through its "DCS of the Future." Brice shared the 9 DCS of the Future Initiatives.
- Brady Rossnagle shared new Tribal brochures and that Tribes can order the brochures through the Division of Child Support's Tribal website at [www.dshs.wa.gov/dcs/tribal](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/dcs/tribal).

► Community Services Division Updates:

- David Rendon further discussed ESA's General Assistance (GA) program budget reduction of \$18.5 million. Some program savings will be achieved through a new 50% earned income disregard for the GA program that will be implemented on October 1, 2009. ESA will propose other changes to attain program savings, with a March 2010 effective date. He will keep tribal partners informed.
- Also, HRSA will be auto-enrolling all GA clients into managed care on November 1, 2009, except American Indians and Alaska Natives. Tribal members are free to enroll in managed care if they wish.

- There were questions surrounding how tribal members who enroll in managed care will access tribal mental health and chemical dependency programs, particularly those who do not self identify as Native American and are auto-enrolled. CSD will follow up with HRSA.
- David discussed CSD's Service Delivery Review (SDR) to improve customer service and make it easier for clients to access their programs. CSD is establishing a state wide toll-free number for all call centers by November and recently set up a separate toll-free number for child care providers. They are also piloting a process in a few CSOs that will allow people to do their intake interview on the same day they apply for benefits. CSD is looking at how to give clients more ways to access benefits, and conduct more of their business with CSD online. CSOs will be contacting Tribes in their area over the next year to see if they are interested in CSD setting up computers and online services on or near their reservation.
- Tribal representatives described some of the confusion and communication difficulties related to call centers and staffing cuts, on top of other changes like Provider One and budget cuts, but expected the SDR changes may ultimately reduce backlogs and be more efficient. David acknowledged that there will be some ups and downs during the transition period. CSD recognizes it may need to do things a little differently in areas with many Tribes to help tribal members learn how to navigate through the new systems.
- The Tribal Eligibility Pilot is almost ready to start. Tribal staff started training on August 3<sup>rd</sup> and Children's, Family and Pregnancy Medicaid is tentatively set to begin mid to late October as a first phase. CSD expressed its thanks and appreciation to the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribal leaders and staff for all the hours they have invested in making this pilot a reality.
- There was some follow up discussion surrounding a policy that began August 2008 that allows the state to keep a TANF parent's grant open for up to 180 days when CPS has temporarily placed their child with an adult caretaker and expects the child to return to the parent's home. Tribal representatives wanted to ensure that Tribal CPS/CWS social workers are aware of this policy. Children's has since confirmed that they communicated this information to Tribal CPS/CWS staff and that Nancy Dufraigne will follow up with another memo to these staff.

► Matrix Update:

- Julie Jefferson, Office of Indian Policy, Region Manager, stated the matrix will be reviewed and updated at the next IPAC ESA/DVR Subcommittee meeting.

► Next Steps:

- **The next IPAC ESA-DVR Subcommittee** meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2009. Because the Capitol View 1 building will not be available, the November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held at the Division of Child Support, Olympia Field Office, 6135 Martin Way E, Lacey, WA 98503.

► Follow up assignments include:

- ESA will share the Unique Needs proposal and elicit feedback at the October 8<sup>th</sup> IPAC meeting.
- Troy will provide an update of the ESA/DVR Subcommittee & WAC Development meeting at the October 8<sup>th</sup> IPAC meeting.
- ESA will provide the Tribes with: (1) proposed statutory changes involving the Review and Adjustment of Child Support Orders; (2) Cash Medical Support legislation (HB1845) passed earlier this year by the 2009 Legislature; and (3) a summary of HB1845 provisions prepared by legislative staff.
- ESA will send out the department's response to questions regarding access to mental health and chemical dependency services by tribal members enrolled in GA managed care.
- ESA and DVR will work with tribes to develop future Subcommittee agenda items.
- ESA will schedule the next IPAC ESA-DVR Subcommittee meeting for November 12, 2009.
- Start the new IPAC ESA/DVR Subcommittee meeting on the second Tuesday's of November, February, May and August, with the exception of the November 12, 2009 meeting.